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INFO RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA 1582
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 0783
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1487
RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0146
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0675
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0172

C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 001130

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KAWC](#) [RW](#)
SUBJECT: RWANDA CONTEMPLATES BREAKING RELATIONS WITH FRANCE

REF: KIGALI 1125

Classified By: Ambassador Michael R. Arietti, reason 1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (C) Ambassador Richard Sezibera (protect), Great Lakes Special Envoy for the Rwandan Government, called Ambassador early on the morning of November 24 to report that the GOR was "moving toward breaking relations with France," as a result of the French issuance of international arrest warrants for nine senior GOR officials (reftel). Sezibera said that the GOR considered the judge's efforts to be orchestrated by French intelligence services, as a means of pre-empting the GOR's own investigations into French involvement in the 1994 genocide. (Note: called the "Mucyo Commission" after its Chair, former Justice Minister Jean de Dieu Mucyo, the Commission has recently begun taking testimony in Kigali on that subject). Sezibera said that indictments of French officials for their role in the genocide would likely follow the contemplated break in relations.

¶2. (C) Sezibera further stated that he had been in touch with French Ambassador Decherf, who told Sezibera that France would not act upon these arrest warrants itself. Although not mentioned by Sezibera, we have been told that the GOR has recalled its ambassador to France for consultations. We understand that the British Ambassador received a similar call from Sezibera on the possibility of breaking relations.

¶3. (C) Sezibera said that French Judge Bruguiere's investigations had been based upon "falsehood and rumor," and that the judge had spoken almost exclusively with "those who denied the genocide," as well as those who had themselves participated in the genocide. Sezibera also disparaged the testimony of a minor RPF defector, whom he characterized as an embezzler and psychologically unfit.

¶4. (SBU) On November 23, a government-organized protest march from a central Kigali roundabout to Amahoro Stadium drew several thousand participants. Government media estimated the crowd at 15,000; an embassy FSN present at the stadium estimated the crowd at five to seven thousand. The peaceful protesters carried signs marked with such messages as "France out of Rwanda" and "France Wants Second Genocide." BBC news reports of a French flag burned at the protest could not be confirmed by our FSN. We understand these protest may continue around the country for the next several days.

¶5. (C) A French citizen attached to the European Commission office in Rwanda told poloff of an impromptu meeting of French officials working in various international organizations, organized by Ambassador Decherf to discuss the

events of the last several days. According to this French citizen, a member of the French embassy staff had paid a call on colleagues at the Belgian embassy (which is responsible for evacuation of French citizens) to "make the normal sort of check in such circumstances." This visit prompted a rumor of impending French evacuation, which Ambassador Decherf dispelled at the meeting of French officials.

¶6. (SBU) In anticipation of potential questions from American media, post suggests the following talking points for any press guidance:

- The USG takes no position on the subject of the shooting down of the Habyarimana presidential jet in 1994. There are several competing theories of responsibility.
- The USG is not in a position to prospectively judge the applicability of the French arrest warrants.
- We are not aware of any up-coming travel to the U.S. by GOR officials potentially subject to these arrest warrants.
- We urge continued dialogue between the French and Rwandan governments.

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ARIETTI